Canal—

A MEMORIAL

FROM THE

INHABITANTS OF THE DISTRICT OF GORE,

AND OTHERS,

To the Honorable

The Legislative Council

AND

HOUSE OF ASSEMBLY

OF

UPPER CANADA

In Provincial Parliament Assembled

BY ORDER OF THE HOUSE OF ASSEMBLY.

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To the Honorable the Legislative Council and House of Assembly of Upper-Canada in Provincial Parliament assembled—The Memorial of the undersigned inhabitants of the District of Gore, and others.

Humbly Sheweth,

That your Memorialists view with great satisfaction the measures adopted by your Honorable Bodies with a view to ascertain the practicability of opening a Canal Navigation between Lakes Ontario and Erie; making Burlington Bay, and Grand River the points of ingress and egress; Your Memorialists being deeply interested in this undertaking, more particularly in opening a passage for Vessels from Lake Ontario into Burlington Bay, beg leave to call your attention to the latter object, and respectfully to recommend its immediate execution,—the advantage to the Province to be expected from the undertaking, both in a commercial and in a political point of view, being great; and the money requisite for its completion within the reach of the means possessed by the Province.

The importance of Burlington Heights as a military position is well known, and Burlington Bay affords the safest and most capacious harbour on Lake Ontario. In the present state of the navigation, a vessel bound for the harbours of York or Niagara, if overtaken by a gale, must await the destruction that threatens her, with no other dependance than her cables and anchors; but were the proposed Canal effected, she might take shelter in the Bay, and lie in safety till the tempest had subsided; and in time of war, what a security would not the Country possess, in having a harbour, sufficiently capacious to contain all the shipping on the Lake, safe from every gale that could blow, and protected by the impregnable fortress of Burlington Heights.

In a commercial point of view, the advantages are so obvious as to render comment unnecessary. To a Country depending upon a distant market for the disposal of its surplus productions, the importance of affording every possible facility to transportation is evident, for whatever is saved in the expence of transport is added to the value of the article transported, and by cheapening the rate of carriage, many articles are rendered valuable, which otherwise would have remained worthless. Your Memorialists feel most sensibly the frequent complaints made in Lower Canada, regarding the

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damaged state in which their produce, especially flour, comes to that market; this they find themselves wholly unable to remedy so long as the article is obliged to be unloaded at the beach, then carted across it to the Lake shore, where it has to be again put into boats to be taken to the roadstead, and shipped on board of the vessels lying there. In these numerous boatings, cartings, loadings, and unloadings, the cargoes are frequently injured, as well by the waves of the Lake, as by rain and the effects of the sun, to which they thus become unavoidably exposed.

The expence of making a Canal through the beach, connecting Lake Ontario and Burlington Bay, on a scale calculated to attain the above important advantages, your Memorialists are informed, from good authority, will not exceed ten thousand Pounds, and they are even told that perhaps it may be effected for a considerable less sum.

Your Memorialists beg leave to observe that even if it were necessary to raise the above sum by way of Loan, for want of funds in any other shape, a toll or dues might be levied on the goods passing through the Canal, sufficient, even at the present early period, to pay the interest of the sum, whilst a great augmentation may with certainty be relied on as the improvement of the country advances. For the last three years, on an average, ten thousand barrels of flour have been shipped annually, from the outlet of Burlington Bay, besides a very considerable quantity of pork, potash, staves, whiskey, and other articles of produce. The present expence on each barrel of flour, from the embarquier at Dundas, to the outlet aforesaid, is one shilling and three-pence, of which one shilling would be saved if Vessels could enter the Bay. Although it must remain with the wisdom of your Honorable Bodies, to fix what proportion of this it would be proper to levy, as a rate, yet your Memorialists do not hesitate to say that even if the whole shilling per barrel were levied, much would be gained by the Canal navigation, both to the owners of the vessels, and to the shippers of the cargoes, inasmuch as they would be enabled to load and unload, at all times, and in all weathers; and thus there would be not only a great deal of delay and detention avoided, but the vessels and cargoes, would be free from the danger of damage, and, indeed, of total loss, to which they are now exposed on a lee shore and roadstead without protection.

These and other advantages which must attend the completion of the proposed undertaking, your Memorialists humbly conceive render it unnecessary for them to enlarge further on the subject. The sum required to effect the undertaking is not very great; the toll might nearly, if not wholly, pay the interest at the very first; and from the advancing state of the Country, and the benefits that would accrue to its trade and agriculture from the undertaking itself, it might with certainty be relied on for the liquidation of the principal at no very distant period. With these advantages on its side, and no disadvantages to detract from them, your Memorialists feel persuaded that they shall not have made the appeal to your Honorable Houses in vain.

Your Memorialists are every way disposed to contribute their share, either as Members of the District, or individually towards the prosecution of the objects proposed; but in a measure in which the general interests of the Province are so intimately blended with theirs, they deem it their duty to make this application, soliciting your Honorable Bodies to make such an appropriation to effect the proposed undertaking, as you in your wisdom may think reasonable and just. And your Memorialists as in duty bound will ever pray, &c. &c.

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